Numb. 83.

MERCATOR:

OR,

Commerce Retrieved,

BEING

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Tuesday, December 1. to Thursday, December 3. 1713.

The Mercator *Entred upon a Discourse of the Trade to* Spain.
The Accounts published in the News-Papers of the Spaniards *making new Demands upon us, false in Fact.*
The Daily Courant *honest in making an Acknowledgment.*
A Party Abroad (as well as at Home) busy to Enflame us, and by writing False to Impose upon the People.

FRom the Beginning of this Work, it has been the principal Complaint of the *MERCATOR*, that we had a Sett of People among us, and in a neighbouring Nation also, who endeavoured by false Suggestions and Misrepresentations of Things, especially relating to our Commerce, to Deceive and Delude the People of Britain, make them Uneasy and Tumultuous, and thereby to carry on the other Designs of a Party.

For the detecting these Things, and preventing, as much as possible, the Delusions of the poor People, the *MERCATOR* was at first set up; and much ill Treatment this Paper has met with for suggesting, that there were any such Designs: the Opposers always alledging there was not. We shall now bring the Matter to a Tryal, and that such a Tryal, as will satisfy all honest indifferent Men, that what the *MERCATOR* has said of this kind, is but too true.

It was by the course of this Work, that the *MERCATOR* was to begin this very Day to treat of the Affair of our Commerce, as it related to Spain, as appears by the *MERCATOR* No. 80. When, as if an Ambuscade had been laid on purpose to surprize him at the Entrance, Behold in our Printed News-papers, even almost all of them of Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday last, came out a Piece of News said to be written from the Hague, and especially Published in the *Daily Courant* and the *Flying Post*, wherein we are told to this effect; (viz.) "That new Difficulties were start-
"ted by the Spaniards in the matter of our Commerce;
"That when it was expected, that the Treaty of Com-
"merce between Great Britain and Spain would have
"been finished and Signed, the Spaniard had made new
"Demands upon us: *Such as these*;

1. "That they would not allow an English Consul
"at Cadiz, to be Judge in Affairs relating to the
"British Merchants among themselves.

2. "That they demanded an Advance of Duties upon
"our Merchants in Valencia, Murcia, Catalo-
"nia, &c.

3. "That they demanded 40 per Cent. Duty of all
"Goods brought into Spain by the British Ships
"which were not of British Growth.

4. "That we should not be suffer'd to Trade to the
"West-Indies but as Biscayners, and in the Name
"of Biscayners.

After these Demands, there was a kind of a Sarcasm published upon the General Head of Parties, insinuating, "That perhaps we might now be obliged to sue to "the French King to make King Philip comply with "us, and settle our Trade, as the Dutch had done in "the Affair of their Peace.

Here is first the suggested Demands of Spain, and next the malicious Inference drawn, on purpose to exasperate the People of Great Britain against those, who managing our Publick Affairs, should suffer such Dealing in the Spaniards, and should bring the British Affairs to so scandalous an Ebb, as to be obliged to seek to the French King to bring the Spaniard to Reason.

Having thus stated the Fact in Substance, tho' not in the exact Words of the News-Papers, because they relate it differently: the *MERCATOR* is very sorry, that he must Tax all the said News-Papers at least with a criminal Credulity, in Publishing a Thing so scandalous to their Country, and with such a reproachful Inference annexed to it, and at the same time not a word of Truth in it all.

It is a melancholy thing, to look on the Condition, which Parties have brought this Nation to, that if any Story have but a pleasing Bitterness in it, the Publishers of News are too easily drawn in to hand it on, because they know, how acceptable it will be, and are too forward to take it on the Credit of their News-Factors abroad, not thinking perhaps, that there is a Mint abroad, in which too many of our Delusions are coin'd, and an Interest abroad, for the Use of whom, those Delusions are to be made currant here.

Before this Paper proceeds to Particulars, it is needful to Repeat the Negative; (viz.) *That the Truth of Fact*

Fact is, that the King of Spain has made no ſuch Demands or Refuſals. He has not refuſed the Conſul at Cadiz; he has not demanded higher Duties in Valencia, &c. or 40 per Cent. on Merchandizes of Foreign Growth brought by the Britiſh Ships; or demanded that we ſhould Trade to the Spaniſh Weſt-Indies as Biſcayners, &c.

In a word, the whole Story is a formal Contrivance, a meer Forgery; whether made here by our Party-Men, or ſent from Holland, by their Confederates, is neither the Buſineſs of, or worth while for the *MERCATOR* to enquire.

Before the *MERCATOR* goes about the proof of theſe Negatives, which however ſhall be done with all poſſible Regularity, he muſt do Juſtice to the Daily Courant, who has made an acknowledgment for the Miſtake, and that he is aſſured the Relation he had publiſhed before, as above, was falſe: This Ingenuity in the Courant, as it clears him from Reflection, as to the Story, ſo it brings him in as an Evidence againſt the Fact.

But how any of our News-Writers will excuſe themſelves for publiſhing the Reflection upon the Queen, as being under a Neceſſity to ſeek to the French King to make up the Treaty for Her; this let them Anſwer, as well as they can: I doubt not, but they, who Coined the Story, Coined alſo that reproachful Inference: But it cannot import any great difference to the Government, in our News-Writers, to publiſh ſuch a piece of Scandal, before they were ſure of the Truth of the Foundation it was built upon.

Nor although all that have publiſhed this ſhould Recant it, and declare it to be falſe, as the Courant has done, could it be called a full amends to the Nation; tho' it is true, 'tis all the amends they can make: But if the Deluſion ſpreads one Mile farther than the Acknowledgment, ſo much Injury is done to Truth, and ſo many Ignorant People are miſled, abuſed and deluded.

The *MERCATOR* ſhall, as this Matter proceeds, ſtate the Particulars of the Forgery, and ſhew exactly, how that Affair ſtands; and, in the mean time, the general Fact is thus: That inſtead of the Spaniards making Demands and ſtarting Difficulties in the Affair of the Treaty of Commerce with the Queen, it is Her Majeſty, who, in behalf of Her Subjects, and for their Safety and Advantage in their Commerce, has made ſome Difficulties, and demanded to have ſome Things explained, ſettled and better underſtood, than ſeem'd to be in the Treaty; and for that purpoſe a Courier is diſpatch'd to King Philip for his Approbation.

This being laid down as a General, and this General being fully proved by the Particulars, as it ſhall be; it is hoped, the *MERCATOR* ſhall no more be blam'd for ſaying, that there are a Party of Men in the World, who, to carry on their private Deſigns, are very buſily employ'd to Deceive and Delude the People; and that the *MERCATOR*, on the other Hand, is employ'd to Undeceive them, and deliver them from thoſe Deluſions, by repreſenting Things to them as they really are, and removing the Miſts and Scales from their Eyes which have interrupted their Sight.

The *MERCATOR* cannot, but with Regret obſerve, How willing thoſe very People are to have the Treaty with Spain hurryed on, who are the readieſt to Complain, when it is done! How impatient they are of the neceſſary Delays! How forward to have it haſtned! And yet how watchful to find Fault, when paſt a Cure!

One would think thoſe People, who would willingly have the Trade ſettled to the Advantage of their Country, ſhould be willing to have time taken for the doing it; and give leave to their Soveraign to make ſuch Objections, and inſiſt upon ſuch Demands, as are for the Security and Advantage of Her Subjects.

But, inſtead of this, the People, who are thus warm at the Matters of Commerce, when ſettled, are equally impatient at the neceſſary time taken up in juſt Heſitations, Objections and Demands, in order to make the Trade advantageous, and the Treaty clear: And while the Government here are concerning themſelves to ſettle the Trade upon juſt and equal Foundation, theſe People fill the Town with uneaſineſs, and amuſe them with groundleſs Reports of the King of Spain making new Demands upon Her Majeſty, and give Particulars of thoſe Demands, which have really no Authority to juſtifie them, nor any Truth to ſupport them.

But the *MERCATOR* is obliged to give this Notice, for the general Satisfaction of all Her Majeſty's Merchandizing Subjects, and repeats it again, that there is not any part of all that Account true; neither do the Spaniards make any ſuch Demands upon us, as are mentioned in the ſaid News-Papers, or any thing like them.

Much leſs is that fooliſh and malicious Inference juſt, that Her Majeſty ſhould be obliged to the French King to bring the Court of Madrid to comply: Who made that Inference, the *MERCATOR* does not enquire; but this may with modeſty be ſaid of it, (viz.) That theſe Things ſhow, that there are ſome People ſomewhere, beſides thoſe at home, very buſily at work to foment Miſunderſtandings among Her Majeſty's Subjects. It were to be wiſhed the People of Britain would ſeriouſly enquire, what People in the World it can be, whoſe Intereſt it is thus to enflame us.

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